



DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

9110-04-P

Coast Guard

33 CFR Part 147

[Docket No. USCG-2015-0318]

RIN 1625-AA00

Safety Zone; Turritella FPSO, Walker Ridge 551, Outer
Continental Shelf on the Gulf of Mexico

AGENCY: Coast Guard, DHS.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking.

SUMMARY: The Coast Guard proposes a safety zone around the Turritella FPSO system, Walker Ridge 551 on the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) in the Gulf of Mexico. The purpose of the safety zone is to protect the facility from all vessels operating outside the normal shipping channels and fairways that are not providing services to or working with the facility. Placing a safety zone around the facility will significantly reduce the threat of allisions, collisions, security breaches, oil spills, releases of natural gas, and thereby protect the safety of life, property, and the environment.

DATES: Comments and related material must be received by

the Coast Guard on or before [**INSERT DATE 30 DAYS AFTER
DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER**].

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments identified by docket number USCG-2015-0318 using any one of the following methods:

(1) Federal eRulemaking Portal:

<http://www.regulations.gov>.

(2) Fax: 202-493-2251.

(3) Mail or Delivery: Docket Management Facility (M-30), U.S. Department of Transportation, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590-0001. Deliveries accepted between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except federal holidays. The telephone number is 202-366-9329.

See the "Public Participation and Request for Comments" portion of the SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION section below for instructions on submitting comments. To avoid duplication, please use only one of these four methods.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: If you have questions on this proposed rule, call or e-mail Mr. Rusty Wright, U.S. Coast Guard, District Eight Waterways Management Branch; telephone 504-671-2138, rusty.h.wright@uscg.mil. If you have questions on viewing or submitting material to the

docket, call Cheryl F. Collins, Program Manager, Docket Operations, telephone (202) 366-9826.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Table of Acronyms

DHS	Department of Homeland Security
FR	Federal Register
FPSO	Floating Production Storage Offloading Vessel
NPRM	Notice of Proposed Rulemaking
OCS	Outer Continental Shelf
USCG	United States Coast Guard

A. Public Participation and Request for Comments

We encourage you to participate in this rulemaking by submitting comments and related materials. All comments received will be posted without change to <http://www.regulations.gov> and will include any personal information you have provided.

1. Submitting comments

If you submit a comment, please include the docket number for this rulemaking, indicate the specific section of this document to which each comment applies, and provide a reason for each suggestion or recommendation. You may submit your comments and material online at <http://www.regulations.gov>, or by fax, mail, or hand delivery, but please use only one of these means. If you submit a comment online, it will be considered received by the Coast Guard when you successfully transmit the comment.

If you fax, hand deliver, or mail your comment, it will be considered as having been received by the Coast Guard when it is received at the Docket Management Facility. We recommend that you include your name and a mailing address, an e-mail address, or a telephone number in the body of your document so that we can contact you if we have questions regarding your submission.

To submit your comment online, go to <http://www.regulations.gov>, type the docket number [USCG-2015-0318] in the "SEARCH" box and click "SEARCH." Click on "Submit a Comment" on the line associated with this rulemaking.

If you submit your comments by mail or hand delivery, submit them in an unbound format, no larger than 8½ by 11 inches, suitable for copying and electronic filing. If you submit comments by mail and would like to know that they reached the Facility, please enclose a stamped, self-addressed postcard or envelope. We will consider all comments and material received during the comment period and may change the rule based on your comments.

2. Viewing comments and documents

To view comments, as well as documents mentioned in this preamble as being available in the docket, go to <http://www.regulations.gov>, type the docket number (USCG-

2015-0318) in the "SEARCH" box and click "SEARCH." Click on Open Docket Folder on the line associated with this rulemaking. You may also visit the Docket Management Facility in Room W12-140 on the ground floor of the Department of Transportation West Building, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

3. Privacy Act

Anyone can search the electronic form of comments received into any of our dockets by the name of the individual submitting the comment (or signing the comment, if submitted on behalf of an association, business, labor union, etc.). You may review a Privacy Act notice regarding our public dockets in the January 17, 2008 issue of the Federal Register (73 FR 3316).

4. Public meeting

We do not now plan to hold a public meeting. But you may submit a request for one by using one of the methods specified under ADDRESSES. Please explain why you believe a public meeting would be beneficial. If we determine that one would aid this rulemaking, we will hold one at a time and place announced by a later notice in the Federal Register.

B. Basis and Purpose

Under the authority provided in 14 U.S.C. 85, 43 U.S.C. 1333, and Department of Homeland Security Delegation No. 0170.1, Title 33, CFR Part 147 permits the establishment of safety zones for facilities located on the OCS for the purpose of protecting life, property and the marine environment

Shell Exploration & Production Company requested that the Coast Guard establish a safety zone around the Turritella FPSO, which is a ship-shaped offshore production facility that stores crude oil in tanks located in its hull. It will attach to a moored turret buoy and move in a 360 degree arc around the position 26° 25'38.74" N, 90°48'45.34" W. The turret buoy is detachable which allows the FPSO to disconnect while the buoy and turret drop below the water's surface to a predetermined depth. The FPSO has a capacity for storing 900,000 barrels of produced oil and is expected to be offloaded on a weekly basis via a floating hose that connects the FPSO to a shuttle tanker. During offloading operations, a shuttle tanker will connect its bow to the Turritella FPSO and its stern to an attendant tug that will assist with safety spacing and stability of the operations. The facility is manned with a crew of 120 people.

The request for the safety zone was made due to safety concerns for both the personnel aboard the facility and the environment. Shell Exploration & Production Company indicated that it is highly likely that any allision with the facility would result in a catastrophic event. In evaluating this request, the Coast Guard explored relevant safety factors and considered several criteria, including but not limited to: (1) The level of shipping activity around the facility; (2) safety concerns for personnel aboard the facility; (3) concerns for the environment; (4) the likeliness that an allision would result in a catastrophic event based on proximity to shipping fairways, offloading operations, production levels, and size of the crew; (5) the volume of traffic in the vicinity of the proposed area; (6) the types of vessels navigating in the vicinity of the proposed area; and, (7) the structural configuration of the facility. For the purpose of safety zones established under 33 CFR part 147, the deepwater area is considered to be waters of 304.8 meters (1,000 feet) or greater depth extending to the limits of the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) contiguous to the territorial sea of the United States and extending to a distance up to 200 nautical miles from the baseline from which the breadth of the sea is measured. Navigation in the vicinity of the

safety zone primarily consists of large commercial shipping vessels, fishing vessels, cruise ships, tugs with tows and the occasional recreational vessel. The deepwater area also includes an extensive system of fairways.

Results from a thorough and comprehensive examination of the criteria, IMO guidelines, and existing regulations warrant the establishment of the proposed safety zone. The proposed regulation would reduce significantly the threat of allisions, oil spills, and releases of natural gas and increase the safety of life, property, and the environment in the Gulf of Mexico by prohibiting entry into the zone unless specifically authorized by the Commander, Eighth Coast Guard District.

C. Discussion of Proposed Rule

Shell Exploration & Production Company requested a safety zone of 500 meters (1640.4 feet) around the stern of the FPSO when it is moored to the turret buoy. The FPSO can swing in a 360 degree arc around the center point at 26° 25'38.74" N, 90°48'45.34" W. If the FPSO detaches from the turret buoy, the safety zone of 500 meters (1640.4 feet) will be measured from the center point of the turret buoy. The request for the safety zone was made due to safety concerns for life and property on the facilities, their

appurtenances, attending vessels and the environment. Shell Exploration & Production Company indicated that it is highly likely that any allision with the facility would result in a catastrophic event. In evaluating this request, the Coast Guard explored relevant safety factors and considered several criteria, including but not limited to, (1) the level of shipping activity around the facility, (2) safety concerns for personnel aboard the facility, (3) concerns for the environment, (4) the likeliness that an allision would result in a catastrophic event based on proximity to shipping fairways, offloading operations, production levels, and size of the crew, (5) the volume of traffic in the vicinity of the proposed area, (6) the types of vessels navigating in the vicinity of the proposed area, both related and unrelated to facility operations, and (7) the structural configuration of the facility.

Results from a thorough and comprehensive examination of the criteria, IMO guidelines, and existing regulations warrant the establishment of a safety zone of 500 meters (1640.4 feet) around the facility. The proposed safety zone would restrict all vessels from entering into, transiting through, remaining in, or anchoring in the safety zone area. Vessels attending to, servicing, or working with the facility would be exempt from the

restrictions in this proposed rule. This proposed safety measure reduces significantly the threat of allisions, collisions, oil spills, and releases of natural gas and increases the safety of life, property, and the environment in the Gulf of Mexico. Authorization to deviate from this proposed rule and transit through the safety zone may be requested from the Commander, Eighth Coast Guard District or a designated representative. Such deviation requests would be considered on a case-by-case basis.

D. Regulatory Analyses

We developed this proposed rule after considering numerous statutes and executive orders related to rulemaking. Below we summarize our analyses based on a number of these statutes or executive orders.

1. Regulatory Planning and Review

This proposed rule is not a significant regulatory action under section 3(f) of Executive Order 12866, Regulatory Planning and Review, as supplemented by Executive Order 13563, Improving Regulation and Regulatory Review, and does not require an assessment of potential costs and benefits under section 6(a)(3) of Executive Order 12866 or under section 1 of Executive Order 13563. The Office of Management and Budget has not reviewed it under those Orders.

This rulemaking is not a significant regulatory action due to the location of the Turritella FPSO - on the Outer Continental Shelf - and its distance from both land and safety fairways. Additionally, the area covered by this proposed safety zone is limited in scope as it would encompass only the waters within 500 meters (1640.4 feet) around the stern of the FPSO when it is moored to the turret buoy. The FPSO can swing in a 360 degree arc around the center point at 26° 25'38.74" N, 90°48'45.34" W. If the FPSO detaches from the turret buoy, the safety zone of 500 meters (1640.4 feet) will be measured from the center point of the turret buoy. This is the area where the FPSO vessel operates and vessels servicing the FPSO transit and maneuver, presenting the area most vulnerable to risk of allusion or collision. Vessels traversing waters near the proposed safety zone will be able to safely travel around the zone using alternate routes. Exceptions to this proposed rule include vessels measuring less than 100 feet in length overall and not engaged in towing. Deviation to transit through the proposed safety zone may be requested. Such requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis and may be authorized by the Commander, Eighth Coast Guard District or a designated representative.

2. Impact on Small Entities

The Regulatory Flexibility Act of 1980 (RFA), 5 U.S.C. 601-612, as amended, requires federal agencies to consider the potential impact of regulations on small entities during rulemaking. The term "small entities" comprises small businesses, not-for-profit organizations that are independently owned and operated and are not dominant in their fields, and governmental jurisdictions with populations of less than 50,000. The Coast Guard certifies under 5 U.S.C. 605(b) that this proposed rule will not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities.

This proposed rule would affect the following entities, some of which might be small entities: The owners or operators of vessels intending to transit or anchor within the area extending 500 meters (1640.4 feet) from the outermost edges of the Turritella FPSO system located in Walker Ridge 551 on the OCS.

This safety zone will not have a significant economic impact or a substantial number of small entities for the following reasons: Vessel traffic can pass safely around the safety zone using alternate routes. Based on the limited scope of the safety zone, any delay resulting from using an alternate route is expected to be minimal

depending on vessel traffic and speed in the area.

Deviation to transit through the proposed safety zone may be requested. Such requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis and may be authorized by the Commander, Eighth Coast Guard District or a designated representative.

If you think that your business, organization, or governmental jurisdiction qualifies as a small entity and that this rule would have a significant economic impact on it, please submit a comment (see ADDRESSES) explaining why you think it qualifies and how and to what degree this rule would economically affect it.

3. Assistance for Small Entities

Under section 213(a) of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996 (Public Law 104-121), we want to assist small entities in understanding this proposed rule. If the proposed rule would affect your small business, organization, or governmental jurisdiction and you have questions concerning its provisions or options for compliance, please submit a comment (see ADDRESSES) explaining why you think it qualifies and how and to what degree this rule would economically affect it.

The Coast Guard will not retaliate against small entities that question or complain about this proposed rule or any policy or action of the Coast Guard.

4. Collection of Information

This proposed rule would call for no new collection of information under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501-3520.).

5. Federalism

A rule has implications for federalism under Executive Order 13132, Federalism, if it has a substantial direct effect on the States, on the relationship between the national government and the States, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities among the various levels of government. We have analyzed this proposed rule under that Order and have determined that it does not have implications for federalism.

6. Protest Activities

The Coast Guard respects the First Amendment rights of protesters. Protesters are asked to contact the person listed in the "For Further Information Contact" section to coordinate protest activities so that your message can be received without jeopardizing the safety or security of people, places or vessels.

7. Unfunded Mandates Reform Act

The Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 (2 U.S.C. 1531-1538) requires Federal agencies to assess the effects of their discretionary regulatory actions. In particular,

the Act addresses actions that may result in the expenditure by a State, local, or tribal government, in the aggregate, or by the private sector of \$100,000,000 (adjusted for inflation) or more in any one year. Though this proposed rule would not result in such an expenditure, we do discuss the effects of this rule elsewhere in this preamble.

8. Taking of Private Property

This proposed rule would not cause a taking of private property or otherwise have taking implications under Executive Order 12630, Governmental Actions and Interference with Constitutionally Protected Property Rights.

9. Civil Justice Reform

This proposed rule meets applicable standards in sections 3(a) and 3(b)(2) of Executive Order 12988, Civil Justice Reform, to minimize litigation, eliminate ambiguity, and reduce burden.

10. Protection of Children from Environmental Health Risks

We have analyzed this proposed rule under Executive Order 13045, Protection of Children from Environmental Health Risks and Safety Risks. This proposed rule is not economically significant and would not create an

environmental risk to health or risk to safety that might disproportionately affect children.

11. Indian Tribal Governments

This proposed rule does not have tribal implications under Executive Order 13175, Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments, because it would not have a substantial direct effect on one or more Indian tribes, on the relationship between the Federal Government and Indian tribes, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities between the Federal Government and Indian tribes.

12. Energy Effects

We have analyzed this proposed rule under Executive Order 13211, Actions Concerning Regulations That Significantly Affect Energy Supply, Distribution, or Use.

13. Technical Standards

This proposed rule does not use technical standards. Therefore, we did not consider the use of voluntary consensus standards.

14. Environment

We have analyzed this proposed rule under Department of Homeland Security Management Directive 023-01 and Commandant Instruction M16475.1D, which guide the Coast Guard in complying with the National Environmental Policy

Act of 1969 (NEPA) 42 U.S.C. 4321-4370f), and have made a preliminary determination that this action is one of a category of actions which do not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the human environment. This proposed rule involves the establishment of a safety zone around an OCS facility to protect life, property and the marine environment. This proposed rule is categorical excluded from further review, under figure 2-1, paragraph (34)(g), of the Commandant Instruction. A preliminary environmental analysis checklist supporting this determination and the Categorical Exclusion Determination are available in the docket where indicated under ADDRESSES. We seek any comments or information that may lead to the discovery of a significant environmental impact from this proposed rule.

List of Subjects in 33 CFR Part 147

Continental shelf, Marine safety, Navigation (water).

For the reasons discussed in the preamble, the Coast Guard proposes to amend 33 CFR part 147 as follows:

PART 147—SAFETY ZONES

1. The authority citation for part 147 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 14 U.S.C. 85; 43 U.S.C. 1333; and Department of Homeland Security Delegation No. 0170.1.

2. Add § 147.863 to read as follows:

§ 147.863 Turritella FPSO System Safety Zone.

(a) *Description.* The Turritella, a Floating Production, Storage and Offloading (FPSO) system is proposed to be installed in the deepwater area of the Gulf of Mexico at Walker Ridge 551. The FPSO can swing in a 360 degree arc around the center point of the turret buoy's swing circle at 26° 25'38.74" N, 90°48'45.34" W, and the area within 500 meters (1640.4 feet) around the stern of the FPSO when it is moored to the turret buoy is a safety zone. If the FPSO detaches from the turret buoy, the area within 500 meters (1640.4 feet) around the center point at 26° 25'38.74" N, 90°48'45.34" W is a safety zone.

(b) *Regulation.* No vessel may enter or remain in this safety zone except the following:

- (1) An attending vessel;
- (2) A vessel under 100 feet in length overall not engaged in towing; or
- (3) A vessel authorized by the Commander, Eighth Coast Guard District.

Dated: June 7, 2015.

David R. Callahan
Rear Admiral, U.S. Coast Guard
Commander, Eighth Coast Guard District

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